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HOUSE BILL 2368
By Turner (Ham)

AN ACT to amend Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 65, relative to railroad crossings.

WHEREAS, Tennessee is 19th in the nation in total number of railroad grade crossings, 18th in the nation in total number of railroad crossing injuries, and 13th in the nation in fatalities per vehicle registered; and

WHEREAS, In the last six years 55 people in Tennessee have died and 46 have been injured in grade crossing collisions; and

WHEREAS, Flashing lights and gates have been demonstrated to greatly reduce the risk of a grade crossing collisions; and

WHEREAS, Only 9.1% of the grade crossings in Tennessee have flashing lights; and

WHEREAS, As a new millenium unfolds it is imperative that grade crossing safety be enhanced in order to protect the lives and well-being of all Tennesseans; now, therefore,
BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Tennessee Code Annotated, Title 65, is amended by adding Sections 2 through 5 of this act as a new chapter thereto.

SECTION 2. This act shall be known and may be cited as "The Railroad Crossing Safety Act of 2000".

SECTION 3. Any county or incorporated city or town which fails to comply with necessary conditions for receipt of federal matching funds for the construction of protective or warning devices at or in the vicinity of any railroad crossing of a public highway owned by such county or incorporated city or town shall have their state-shared taxes in an amount sufficient to construct such protective or warning device withheld from such county or incorporated city or town.

SECTION 4. The department of transportation is hereby directed to prepare an annual report describing the number of accidents and the number of deaths attributed to railroad crossing collisions in the prior calendar year. Such report shall be delivered to the speaker of the house and the speaker of the senate and to each member of the house and senate transportation committees.

SECTION 5. The department of transportation is hereby directed to prepare an annual report describing the most dangerous railroad crossings in the state. The report shall list the one hundred (100) most dangerous railroad crossings by city and by county. The report shall be submitted to each newspaper of general circulation in the state.

SECTION 6. This act shall take effect July 1, 2000, the public welfare requiring it.